Department of Navy Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer's Training Conference

May 5, 2004

Brad Underwood

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC

VA Mission

"...to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

Abraham Lincoln

Established in 1930 as an independent Federal Agency

The Veterans Administration, or “VA”

Elevated to Cabinet status in 1988, now

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

One VA

- Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA)
- National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA)

- 57 VA Regional Offices (RO)
- RO located in every State plus Washington DC, Puerto Rico, and Philippines.
- Toll-Free Telephone Service (1-800-827-1000)

Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

- Compensation and Pension
- Education
- Home Loan Guaranty
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- Insurance

U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Compensation & Pension Service

Veterans Services

Manages public contact programs and services through Veterans Service Centers at the 57 ROs

- Direct Services
- Outreach
- Fiduciary Program

Direct Services

- Telephone Interviews (6,040,477 in FY 2003)
- Personal Interviews (1,071,450 in FY 2003)
- Correspondence (347,064 in FY 2003)
- Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act Requests (83,254 in FY 2003)
- Briefings at military facilities (5,368 sessions with 197,082 attendees in FY 2003)

Outreach

- Military (Transition Assistance Program, TAP at Sea, OEF/OIF Seriously Injured/Ill, Reserve/Guard, Casualty Assistance)
- Seamless Transition
- Dependents and Survivors
- Elderly Veterans
- Former POWs
- Homeless Veterans
- Minorities
- Women Veterans
- Unclaimed Indigent Veterans

Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

- Joint DOD/DOL/Homeland Security/VA
- For pre-separatees/retirees (within 12 months of separation or 24 months of retirement)
- Scheduled at military separation installations (approx. 176 in U.S.)
- 3-day workshops (VA portion ½-day)

TAP

(continued)

- Workshop Topics
  - Military separation issues (pay, housing, transportation, etc.)
  - Post-military career/employment
  - VA benefits and services
  - Other federal benefits and services
- In FY 2003:
  - 3,253 workshops with 110,955 participants
- VA rep conducts one-on-one interviews after his/her briefing, as time allows

Overseas Military Service Program (OMSP)

- Travel funded by DoD
- 2 tour groups of 6 Overseas Military Services Coordinators for 120 – 150 days
- Locations

  Germany, England, Italy, S. Korea, Japan, and Okinawa
- Provide VA benefits briefings & individual counseling
- FY 2003 – 472 briefings with 12,947 attendees and 5,050 personal interviews

Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Program

- Jointly sponsored by VA and DoD
- To expedite veterans' receipt of VA Compensation upon release from active duty
- Disability examinations conducted by VA medical facilities, contract medical examiners, or military
- Covers 135 military installations (all branches)

BDD

(continued)

- BDDs in Germany and Korea
- Can apply w/in 180 days of separation
- They take claims and rate disabilities
- Goal: adjudicate claims w/in 30 days of release from active duty
- Results: increased timeliness, quality and customer satisfaction, and reduced costs

Compensation for Service Connected Disabilities

- Disabilities **do not** have to be incurred in combat or during a period of war
- Disabilities are rated 0% to 100%
  - VA rating is independent of any military rating
- Payments begin at 10%
- Monthly TAX FREE payments
- Extra allowance for dependents beginning at 30%

Disability Pension

Must meet all four conditions:

- Wartime Service
- Discharge under conditions other than dishonorable
- Limited Income
- Permanently & Totally Disabled

Current income limits:

Veteran $824 (monthly)

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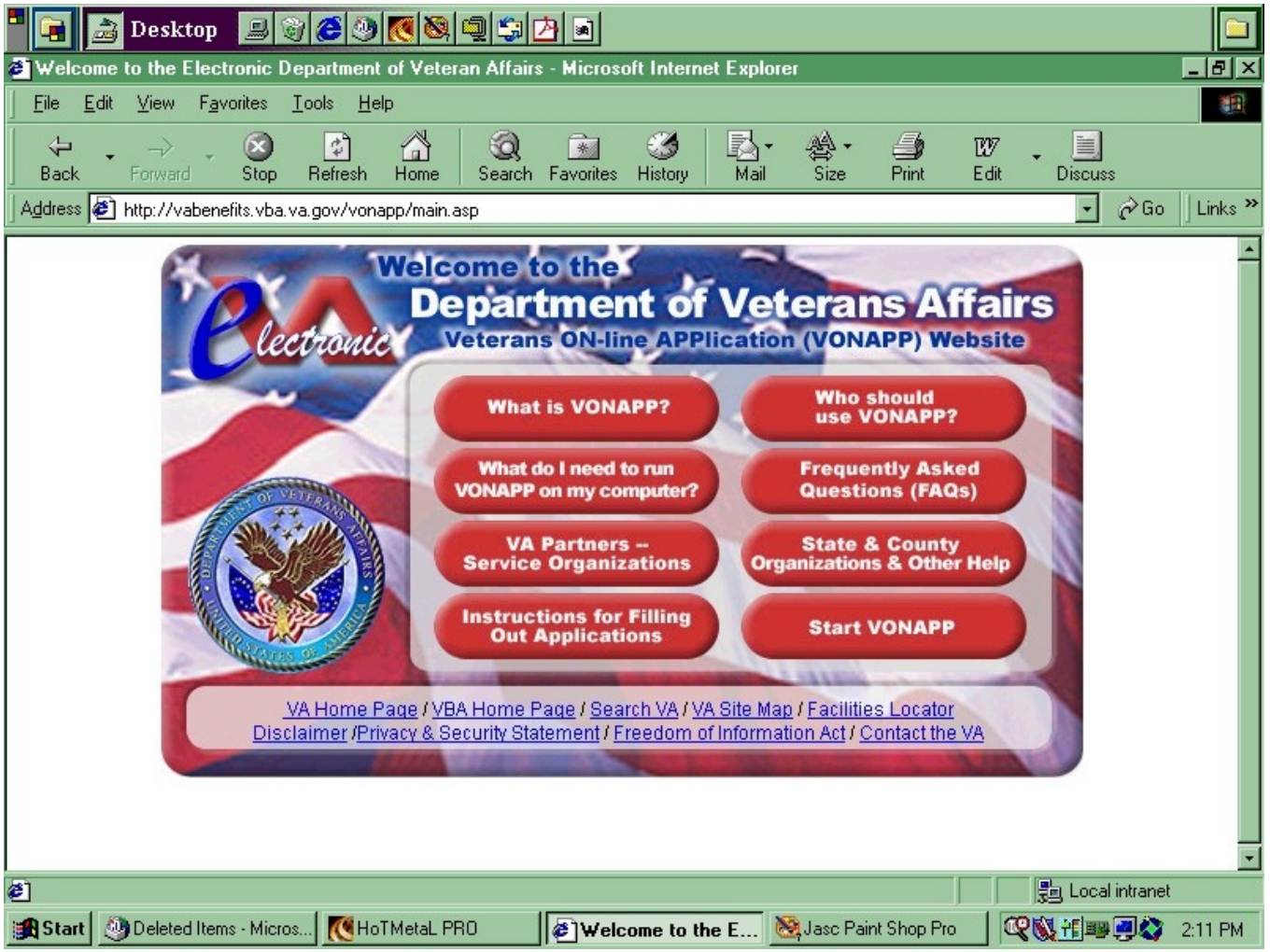

www.va.gov

May 2004

Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) – Active Duty Eligibility Categories

- Category 1 – Entered active duty after 6/30/85
- Category 2 – Have remaining entitlement under Vietnam Era GI Bill
- Category 3 – Involuntary separated, or voluntarily separated under VSI or SSB programs
- Category 4 – Eligible to convert from VEAP (GI Bill for Post-Vietnam Era service members before MGIB)

Education

1-888-GIBILL-1

- Degree Programs
- Non-degree programs
- Apprenticeship Programs/OJT
- Correspondence Programs
- Vocational Flight Training Program
- *New* - Licensing & Certificate Tests
  - $2,000 per test
- Benefits expire 10 years after last release from active duty

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Home Loan Guaranty

http://www.homeloans.va.gov/elig.htm

- **Eligibility**
  - **Active duty** - Served on active duty continuously for at least 181 days or 90 days during period of war
  - **Veteran** - Generally, 24 months of continuous active duty or the full period they were called to active duty. Discharge = under conditions other than dishonorable
- Usually, no down payment required
- Negotiated interest rates and points
- Buyer informed of estimated value
- VA inspection of newly built home and one year warranty
- No time limit

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)

- Service designed to assist disabled veterans in qualifying for and obtaining suitable employment
- VA-established service-connected disability of at least 10% with a serious employment handicap *or*
- 20% with an employment handicap and be discharged or released from military service under other than dishonorable conditions.
- Entitlement period - generally within 12 years of separation or service-connection award notification by VA

Insurance

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI)

- Servicemember coverage $250,000 (effective 4/1/01)
  - Basic coverage premiums reduced to 6.5c per $1,000 per month
  - Spouse coverage $100,000 (increments of $10,000) premiums reduced as of 7/1/03
  - Free dependents coverage (automatically insured for $10,000)
  - Free 120 days of coverage after discharge
- Convert to Commercial Policy (spouse or vet)
- Veterans Group Life Insurance (Vet only)
- Extension for 1 year fm discharge if totally disabled

1-800-419-1473

Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)

- Coverage equal to SGLI at separation
- Lifetime renewable term insurance
- VGLI application mailed to last address of record w/ military w/in 30-75 days of discharge
- Benefits for SGLI/VGLI

  Accelerated Benefit Option: terminally ill (9 months or less to live) may apply for up to 50% coverage

  Beneficiary Financial Counseling Service: Free financial counseling for beneficiaries

1-800-419-1473

Veterans Health Administration (VHA)

www.va.gov/elig

1-877-222-8387

- **Eligibility**
  - Discharged under honorable conditions
  - Served a minimum of 2 years (if discharged after 9/7/80)
  - If Guard or Reservist, served entire period for which called to active duty other than training purposes only
  - Note: VA will treat veterans for FREE for any illness associated with service in combat in a war after the Gulf War or during a period of hostility after November 11, 1998. The time limit for this treatment is **two years** from release from active duty.
- **Dental Care**
  - 1-time routine dental care
  - 90 days after discharge, if DD214 shows that no dental care was received.

National Cemetery Administration (NCA)

- National VA Cemeteries *(currently 120 in 39 states)*
- State Cemetery
- Flag
- Presidential Memorial Certificate
- Burial Allowance (if eligible)
- Plot-Interment Allowance
- Headstone/Marker

Contacting VA

- General Benefits: 1-800-827-1000
- Education: 1-888-GIBILL-1
- Insurance: 1-800-419-1473
- Gulf War: 1-800-749-8387
- Health Benefits: 1-877-222-8387
- www.va.gov

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